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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/081,665	02/21/2002	Wen-Ming Chen	67,200-662	2095

7590

08/12/2003

TUNG & ASSOCIATES
Suite 120
838 W. Long Lake Road
Bloomfield Hills, MI 48302

EXAMINER

KACKAR, RAM N

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

1763

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DATE MAILED: 08/12/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/081,665

Applicant(s)

CHEN ET AL.

Examiner

Ram N Kackar

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 21 February 2002.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-14 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 6-10 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5 and 11-14 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☒ Claim(s) 1-14 are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s) _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other:

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:
 - I. Claims 6-10, drawn to a method, classified in class 414, subclass 935.
 - II. Claims 1-5 and 11-14 drawn to an apparatus, classified in class 156, subclass 345.24.
2. Inventions I and II are related as process and apparatus for its practice. The inventions are distinct if it can be shown that either: (1) the process as claimed can be practiced by another materially different apparatus or by hand, or (2) the apparatus as claimed can be used to practice another and materially different process. (MPEP § 806.05(e)). In this case the apparatus can be used with detection of processes other than those relating to microchip fabrication. For example material-handling devices could benefit from this.
3. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.
4. During a telephone conversation with Mr. Randy W Tung on 5/12/03 a provisional election was made with traverse to prosecute the invention of Group II, claims 1-5 and 11-14. Affirmation of this election must be made by applicant in replying to this Office action. Claims 6-10 are withdrawn from further consideration by the examiner, 37 CFR 1.142(b), as being drawn to a non-elected invention.
5. Applicant is reminded that upon the cancellation of claims to a non-elected invention, the inventorship must be amended in compliance with 37 CFR 1.48(b) if one or more of the

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currently named inventors is no longer an inventor of at least one claim remaining in the application. Any amendment of inventorship must be accompanied by a request under 37 CFR 1.48(b) and by the fee required under 37 CFR 1.17(i).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

6 The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

7 Claims 1, 3, 5, 11 and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Strodtbeck et al (US 6150638).

Strodtbeck et al disclose a pedestal in a micro chip fabrication equipment (Fig 6 and Col 1 lines 15-22), plurality of lift mechanism pins having respective tips adapted for contact with the wafer (Col 4 lines 17-29) the tips having sensing means for detection of proximity of the wafer (Col 4 lines 17-29), the sensor disclosed to infra red (Col 6 lines 51- Col 7 line 7)

8 Claims 1 and 3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Daisuke Matsunaga (JP 05129421).

Daisuke Matsunaga discloses a pedestal in a micro chip fabrication equipment (Fig 1-1), plurality of lift mechanism pins having respective tips adapted for contact with the wafer (3) the pins having sensing means for detection of proximity of the wafer (4)

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

9 The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

10 Claims 2, 4, 12 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Strodtbeck et al (US 6150638) in view of Kiyooki Kumazaki (JP 11214484).

Strodtbeck et al disclose plurality of lift mechanism pins with respective tips having sensing means for detection of proximity of the wafer, and longitudinal bores in the lift pins to accommodate sensors (Col 6 lines 51- Col 7 line 7) but do not disclose the sensors to be capacitive proximity type.

Kiyooki Kumazaki discloses capacitive proximity sensors to detect wafers (Abstract and Fig 1-50).

Therefore it would have been obvious for one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of invention to have a capacitive proximity sensor in Strodtbeck et al for its reliability, economy and easy installation.

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. US 6592673 and JP 1169855, 10160420 all disclose sensors associated with lift pins to detect substrates.

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Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Ram N Kackar whose telephone number is 703 305 3996. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8:00 A.M to 5:P.M.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Gregory Mills can be reached on 703 308 1633. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703 872 9310 for regular communications and 703 872 9311 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703 308 0661.

RK

August 6, 2003


GREGORY MILLS
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 1700